

SHORT SERMONS

Text: Who is on the Lord's side? Ex. 32:26.

What an astonishing lapse was this of the chosen people, so recently redeemed with a high hand and an outstretched arm from Egyptian bondage. The series of mighty plagues, the destroying angel's midnight errand, the march to liberty, laden with spoil, the parting of the sea, the amazing journey over its dry bed, the walls of water standing miraculously on either hand, the drowning of the fierce Egyptian army, all these wonderful interventions of the Almighty arm, all these sublime manifestations of a living God, all these acts of mercy and deliverance were apparently forgotten in a few days, and here they were bowing down to the Egyptian calf, one of the many defeated and destroyed gods of the divine visitation. It was an astounding instance of depravity, but there was human nature in it, for have we not all a long memory for the world, and a short one for God and his mercies? How multitudinous are the manifestations of his loving kindness, and how soon they pass from memory, leaving the heart discontented, complaining and rebellious.

There was another reason for this lapse of Israel from Jehovah. He had just given them the ten commandments, and in them a standard of holiness which roused all the aversion and rebellion of the unregenerate heart. Better Egypt with all its fleshpots, its physical bondage and liberty to sin. Better the dumb gods who did not impose so galling a yoke as godliness, who did not demand of their votaries the practice of righteousness. This was why they set up the calf. Oh how gratified and how abominable men would be if they could only escape the law of righteousness. And they think to escape it by swapping gods. And the same futile scheme is resorted to in this our day.

But who is on the Lord's side. It is certainly the side of duty. It is certainly the side of right, and right reason. It is certainly the side of safety; for the opposite side there is a devouring sword. It is certainly the strongest side, and the side of final victory. Are not these sufficient reasons why we should speedily range ourselves on the Lord's side? Waving all other considerations, men like to be on the winning side. Can you doubt which of the two it is?

Decide the question immediately, for in delay conscience may be seared, forbearance may cease, privileges may end, opportunity may depart.

Text: For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned Matt. 12:37.

The Pharisees had just ascribed the miracles of Jesus to the instrumentality of Beelzebub, a speech which called forth the most stinging rebukes and the most solemn warnings ever uttered by our Lord. It was a blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which would never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come. Notwithstanding their fair profession of piety these pharisees were corrupt at heart, and out of

the abundance of that corruption came this blasphemous speech. We find it true nowadays that the habitual conversation is an accurate index to the heart, and therefore it follows logically that a man will be justified, or condemned, by the words of his mouth.

Let us note the various practical applications of the text. I see what I suppose to be a manifestation of hypocrisy in another, and forgetting that it is not my office to judge him, I proceed to do so with abundant zeal and scant charity. In the judgment the Lord will only have to quote my own words to condemn any lack of perfect sincerity which at any time may have appeared in my own life. Suppose again I harshly denounce another for his supposed covetousness, for his undisciplined temper, for his spiritual indolence, or for any lapse from perfect rectitude of which I may imagine him guilty. If in any of these respects I have come short of the standard set up in my own words, the Lord will only have to quote me to pass sentence. Take the case of a preacher, he is constantly setting forth the measure of duty for others, a measure according in theory at least with the scriptural standards. Suppose he comes short of this standard in his own conduct; the Lord will be able to judge him out of his own mouth. Suppose on the other hand he lives as high as he talks; then by his words will he be justified. If we do not get a rather vivid glimpse of personal responsibility in these considerations, our spiritual perception must be dull indeed. The ideal life, as it is set forth in the Bible is of course perfect, and in all its perfection the preacher must set it before his people. He may not be able to live up to it, but in his heart, his desire, his purpose, he may strenuously disallow any departure or any falling short, knowing that his shortcomings will not then be imputed to him as sin, since the doing of that which he disallows is not the act of his will, but of the "sin which dwelleth in him." To the imperfect, whether of the voluntary or the involuntary class, there is one word of wisdom: "Judge not that ye be not judged."

ABOUT THE DEATH OF CHRIST

J. M. BOWMAN

Among many persons, there is little said or thought about the death of Christ. With many it is of little importance. A very large body of Christians, and non Christians, as well; of many different shades of belief, or with so little belief that it will hardly make a shade; put great stress upon the life teachings and example of Christ, which, in their thought have little or no connection with his death. Their hope is in honestly trying to follow his examples and obey his teachings. To them the death of Christ is little more than the result of allowing an angry mob to have its own way. Far too many take the course of "thinking, believing, and acting," rather than "hearing, believing, and acting." But, "what saith the Scripture?"

Mr. Torrey says that the death of Christ is directly mentioned in the New Testament

more than one hundred and seventy-five times. I gather a few thoughts suggested in his "what the Bible teaches." Christ became partaker of flesh and blood in order that he might die. Heb. 2:14. Jesus came into the world that he might die as a ransom; Matt. 20:28.

His death was the subject about which Moses and Elijah talked with him on the Mt. of Transfiguration. Luke, 9:30,31. The death of Christ was of very deep interest and concern to the Old Testament prophets. I Peter, 1:11. The angels were deeply interested in the death of Christ. I Peter, 1:12. It is the theme of the new song in heaven. Rev. 5:8, 12.

Glenford, Ohio.

"How Beautiful to be With God"

New York Observer

As the shore line of Time faded into the glad light of Eternity, and the sweet consciousness of the Infinite Presence filled the wonderful spirit of Frances Willard, she looked up with the calm of a soothed child, falling asleep in the golden glow of the eventime and said:

"How beautiful to be with God."

Like a benediction, the words fell upon the ears of the listening world, and the message spoken from the borderland of Light, floats back upon the pathway of turmoil and conflict, of sorrow and joy, and breathes the sweet fragrance of a higher hope into our hearts and lives.

"How beautiful to be with God." We hear the glad echo of this last testimony, and a new realization of companionship with God comes up within us. The cares and responsibilities of everyday living throng us, their duties press weary, but the harmony of Heaven is ours, the beauty of its spirit touches with forgetfulness much of the hardship of the journey. In this full consciousness, all life is transformed. The flowers spring up, the birds sing, the skies are blue; sad hearts cease their crying, because of the cup of comfort loving hands offer in unselfish thoughtfulness. Resentment dies out. Oppression is disarmed, the lash falls on the silent air, the stricken are tenderly lifted, the hungry fed. Strife is no more. "Peace on earth" swells out its joyful music to the tread of the multitude, for the heart of man at last has found companionship with the Most High, the source of all that is noble and pure and holy, and feels with every heart beat the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man. Thus comes to pass the blessed words: "Behold, old things are passed away, all things are become new;" "Thy will be done upon earth, even as it is in heaven."

WANTED—Agents for "History of the Spanish-American War," by Hon. Henry Watterson. A complete, authentic history; illustrated with over 76 full-page half-tones and many richly colored pictures. Large royal octavo volume, superb outfit, postpaid for only 50 cents (stamps taken). Most liberal terms given. The greatest opportunity of the year. Address: THE WERNER COMPANY, Akron, Ohio.